



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE EXHIBITIONS.

## V.—NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN.

### FIFTY-FIFTH EXHIBITION.

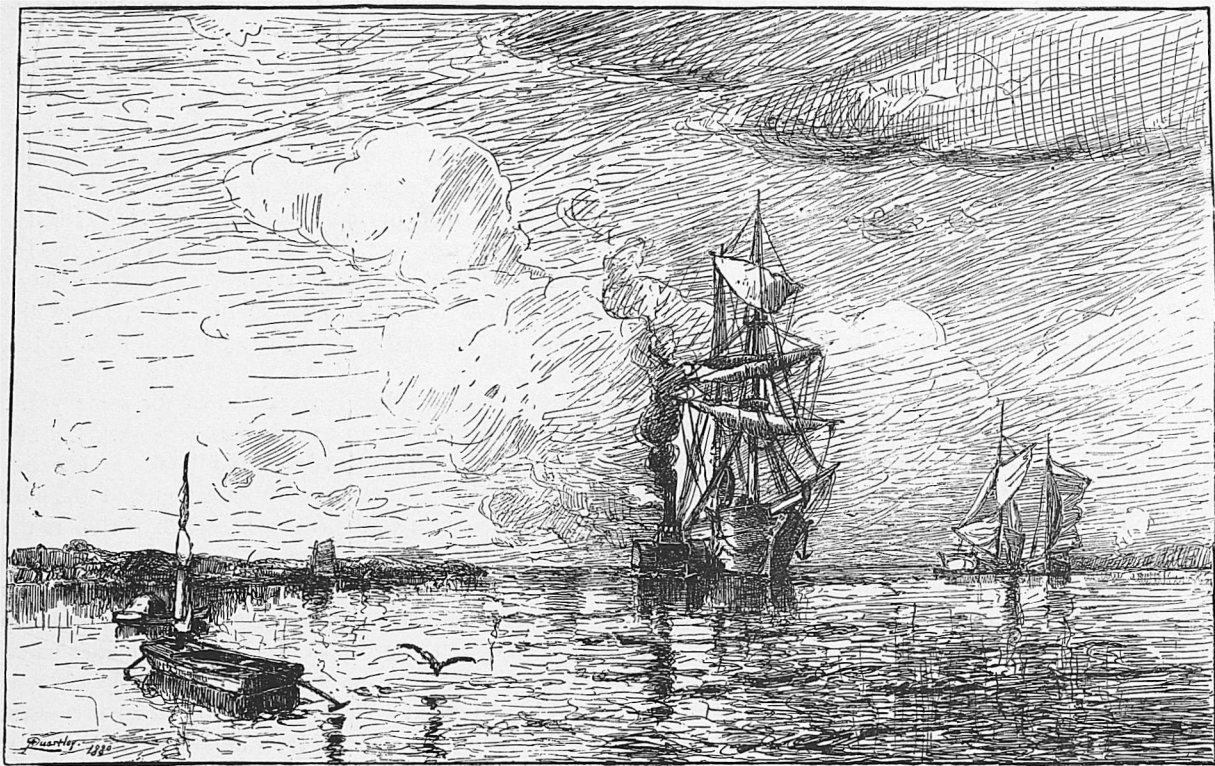
(OPENED MARCH 30. CLOSED MAY 29.)

(*Second and Concluding Notice.*)



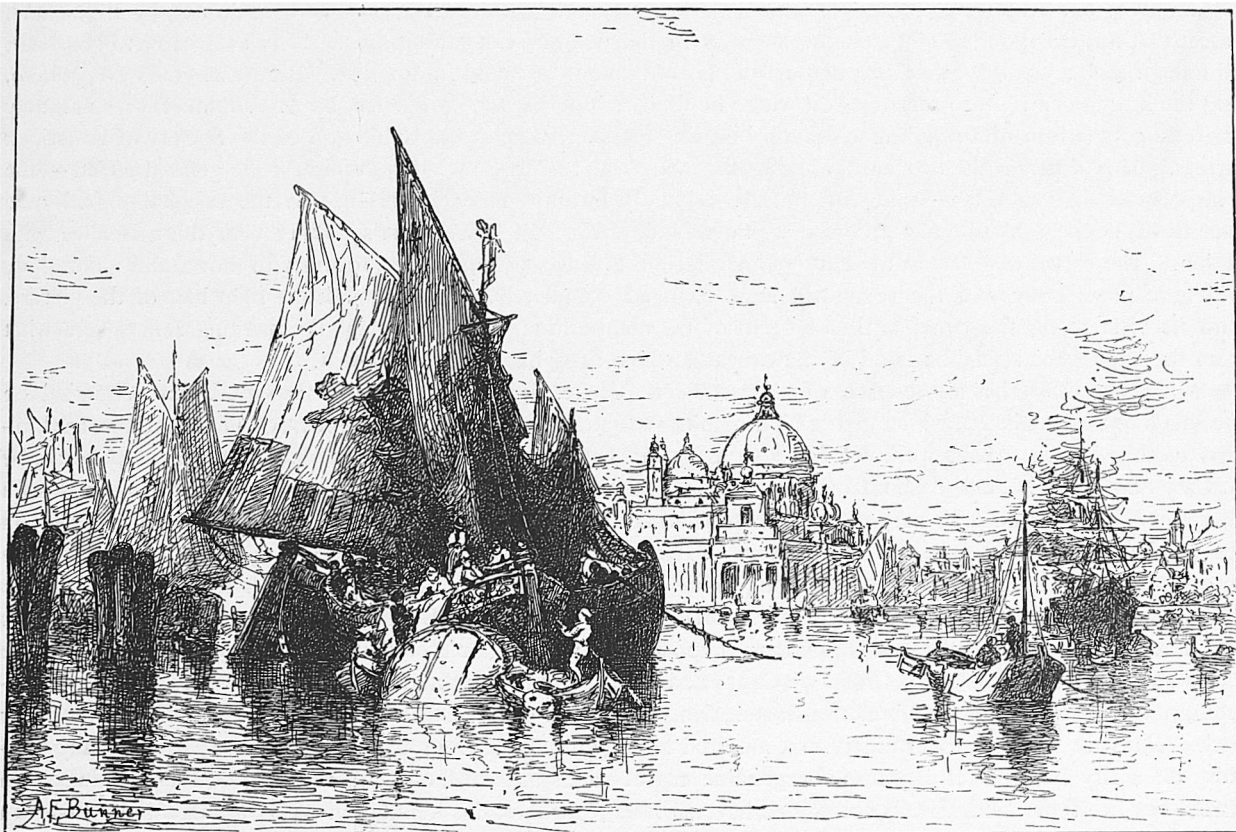
WE have found occasion to observe elsewhere, there is no branch of our art that is so thoroughly weak and uninteresting as the department of animal painting. Here and there an artist of merit seems on the point of startling us with some strong and original characterization of animal life, and then stops there, as if the inspiration had left him. The works of this description in the present Exhibition do little to reverse this opinion. With three or four exceptions, they offer a low average in a line which Landseer, Troyon, Bonheur, Jacques, and Schreyer have raised to such a high rank abroad. A group of sheep, called *A New England Pastoral*, by J. Foxcroft Cole, is agreeably composed, but is singularly lacking in attraction. There is a weakness about it that we should not expect in a canvas by an artist of his ability and sympathetic feeling for nature. Action is not within the province of Mr. Cole's genius, but he excels in quiet effects, and rarely fails, as in this case, to interest. George Inness, Jr. is represented by a powerful painting of draught-horses hastening homewards before a thunder-storm that already casts the gloom of its scurrying wings over the sullen landscape. There is dash and energy in this, as in most of his work, and thus, while it is yet immature and leaves much to be desired, we recognize in it evidences of imagination and reserve-force which are promising and valuable at this juncture. A. F. Tait contributes a number of characteristic scenes, in a style that is generally too finished to give thorough satisfaction, reminding us sometimes of painting on Dresden porcelain. But it must in justice be conceded that he shows a careful knowledge of the subjects he selects, and renders them with a certain dramatic truth that relieves the softness of the *technique*. One of the best examples recently from his easel may be seen in the clever composition entitled *The Intruder*, in which an irate hen is seen defending her brood from a very small but insolent spaniel, who is presuming too much on the strength of his high pedigree and elegant breeding. A moralist could find in this pleasing picture the suggestion of certain phases of social life. *Heirs at Law* is a carefully painted but uninteresting group of dogs, snarling over a crown on a velvet cushion. It is by Mr. James H. Beard, who concerns himself with the serious aspects of canine society, while his brother, William H. Beard, makes animal painting a means for satirizing the foibles and vices of the human race. Probably the most ambitious subject he has yet selected is his satire of the *Bulls and Bears* of the Stock Exchange. A tumultuous, combative crowd of the ursine and the bovine tribes is seen surging through Wall Street, with a vast variety of character and some very spirited action and grouping. But the color of the painting is not agreeable, while the buildings in the background are badly drawn, and so thinly painted as to have an air of unreality. More satisfactory is the inimitable burlesque called *Voices of the Night*. We remember a story by Miss Phelps with the same subject and title, but it was not half so funny, if we can compare literary with pictorial art. Dogs, owls, cats, and frogs are ranged in rows, singing the nightly chorus of discords. The facial expression of the cats is especially worthy of note. *A Stream through the Meadow*, by Mr. Peter Moran, is solidly painted, and is one of the most wholesome works in the Academy, while a brace of hounds, entitled *Waiting*, painted by Mr. Arnott, is conscientiously and pleasingly rendered.

On the border-line between landscape and figure we find a number of conspicuous works, among which we note an ideal composition by Mr. Dewing, entitled *Morning*. Thoroughly fanciful is the idea of two slender young damsels — nymphs, for all we know, although fully clad — sitting on a marble bench, hailing the saffron-colored dawn with a tuneful peal through long, slender trumpets, while two delicate greyhounds seem to respond to the gladsome melody. Of this picture, as of so many others, it must in truth be said that it impresses one as being the work of a young man not yet firmly established in his art; but there is a delightful refinement in the *motif* that fully compensates for whatever there may be of short-comings. It reminds the beholder involuntarily of the dreamy allegories of the early Renaissance, and one would not be surprised to find the same subject among the illustrations of the *Hypnerotomachia* of Poliphilus. Compared with the solid realism of so many of our young painters, it gives striking evidence of the wide range of American art.



MORNING ON THE SOUND.

By ARTHUR QUARTLEY. — FROM A SKETCH BY THE ARTIST.



MORNING IN VENICE.

By A. F. BUNNER. — FROM A SKETCH BY THE ARTIST.

We pass from the mystically ideal to the poetry of every-day life when we turn to Mr. Lippincott's *Farm-Yard in Brittany*, a clever grouping of fowls and children, or to Mr. Wordsworth Thompson's *May-Day, Fifth Avenue*, an interesting picture, full of variety, and executed with this artist's usual care and felicity of style. Other meritorious works in this line are *The Toll-Gate*, by Mr. Finck, *Bait-Gatherers of Treport*, by Edgar M. Ward, and a dreamy, poetic painting of an *Indian Girl* floating by moonlight among the lilies of a creek, the work of Edward Gaul. Mr. Bricher, who has been giving his attention latterly to genre combined with coast scenery, devoting himself especially to the representation of city ladies rustivating by the sea-side in elegant costumes of the latest styles, has undoubtedly struck a popular vein, which he has worked up with indefatigable perseverance and good technical success. In *Sea Dreams*, a lady gazing over the sea, he probably gives us his best effort of this sort. We cannot, however, get up much enthusiasm over works that seem to us purely mechanical, and lacking in life and spirit. There is far more inspiration, as it seems to us, in his wreck, called the *Last of the Flying Cloud*. The old hull is badly drawn, but there is a good feeling of space and color in this picture.

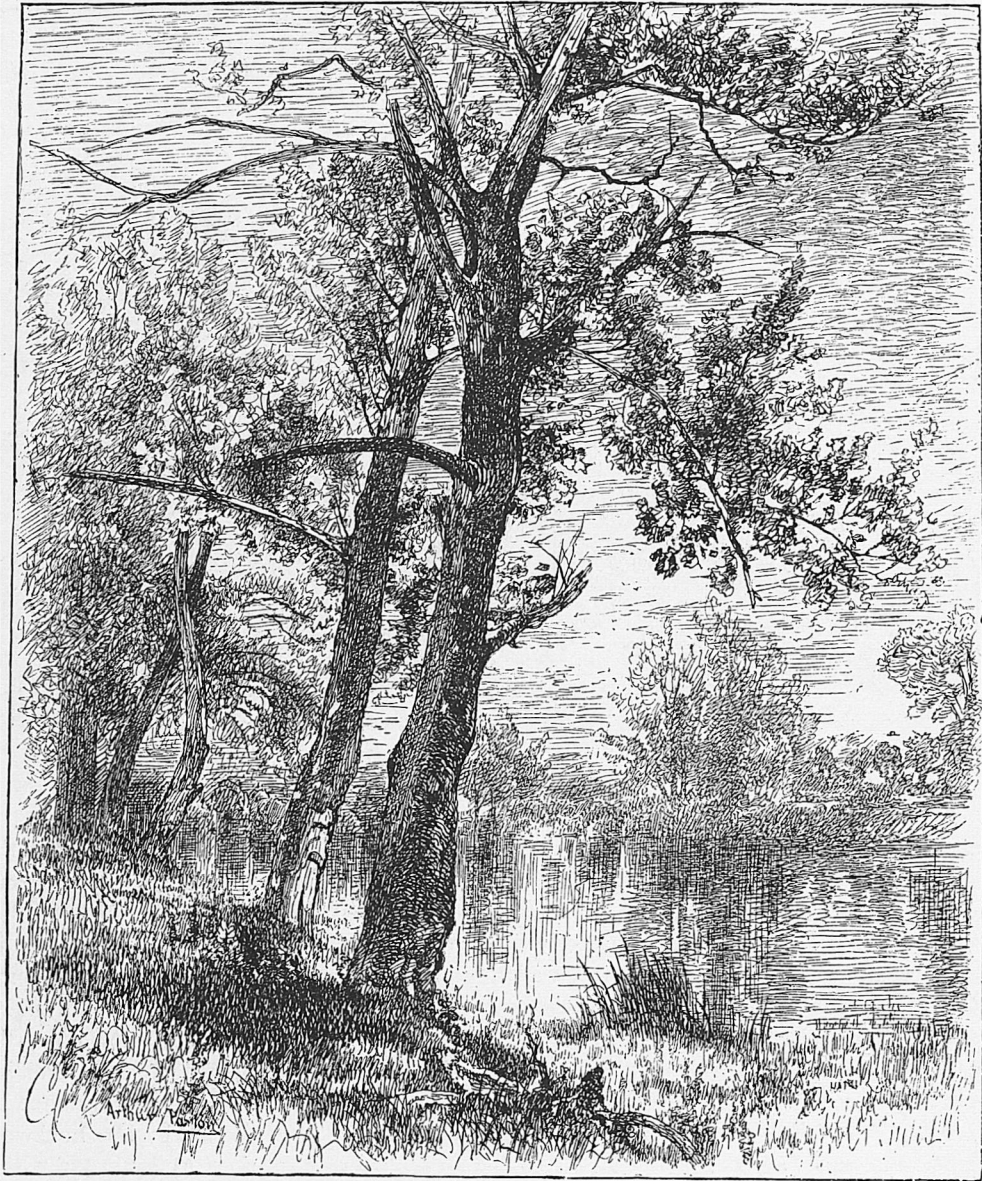
The marine paintings of the Exhibition, it must be admitted, present a lower average than for some years. We miss the noble compositions of Mr. De Haas, who is represented this year by an unimportant work. But Mr. Quartley's *Homeward*, a gray evening scene, is full of suggestion. *Morning on the Sound* is also an effective composition. There is a grand feeling of airiness and space about it, and it indicates observation and thought, while we could wish that the details of the ship were more in accordance with the facts. When a ship is the prominent object of a picture, it is important that it should be as correct as if it were a horse or a man. It is not an allowable principle in art that a painter may presume on the supposed ignorance of his audience to impose on them untrue representations of the objects he depicts. It is no more necessary to give all the details of a ship than of a horse, but what are given should be true. These observations apply also to Mr. Henry P. Smith's painting, *Off the Bishops*. A fine atmosphere and crisp *technique* is marred, as in most of his works, by a ship so preposterously modelled as to ruin an otherwise good picture. If it is worth while painting a ship at all, it is worth while to study it and "know the ropes." Mr. Quartley's *Trinity from the River* is an important work, that at once commands respect for the *motif*. There is a lack of mystery about the lower half of the picture which is untrue to nature. At that hour the outlines of groups of buildings untouched by the light should be indefinite, and veiled by mysterious grays. But the splendor of the early sun just striking on the spire and the distant roofs is effectively rendered, and the water is liquid and natural in tone.

Many of our artists still prefer to draw their inspiration from foreign scenes, and we do not, by any means, regret that this is so, our delight in home subjects to the contrary notwithstanding. It is as narrow to condemn all foreign motives as it is to declare that artistic beauty cannot be found in America. Beauty abounds everywhere, and the artist has a right to seize upon it where he finds it. *Morning in Venice*, by A. F. Bunner, very naturally invites a comparison with Mr. Bunce's picture bearing the same title, in the Exhibition of the Society of American Artists. How different the two, and yet both how interesting! Mr. Bunce cares more for the general effect, — the "impression," if you will, — while Mr. Bunner evidently attaches more importance to the subject. Mr. Bunce dreams of Venice; Mr. Bunner enjoys it with eyes wide open. In Mr. Bunner's picture everything is alive with action. The crowd of boats to the left — somewhat too massive, perhaps — is preparing to move, and before long will have flown away, and the scene will have changed completely. To our mind, the right half of the picture, with its vista along the canal, is the best part of the composition. Unfortunately, the painting suffers somewhat from the uncongenial neighborhood of the canvases which hang immediately below it.

Mr. Harry Chase has also chosen a foreign subject. He exhibits a group of *Herring Fishers* stranded on the sands at Scheveningen, which merits high commendation for the artistic arrangement of lines and the truthfulness of the details. What work we have seen by Mr. Chase is delightfully promising. *A Fresh Breeze*, by A. Cary Smith, a schooner dashing over a chopping sea, is one of those racy bits that fill a sailor's heart with delight. Mr. Davidson's *Crossing the Bar* is also a spirited painting, of a French cutter, with a lugger seen in the middle distance. We are at a loss, however, to understand what hidden meaning he has in representing these vessels performing the impossible feat of sailing with different winds in the same picture. Mr. Bierstadt's *Turquoise Sea* adds nothing to his reputation, or to the merit of the Exhibition. Setting aside the question of its artistic qualities, it represents a scene that is physically impossible. Surf is never of that color in any latitude. It is true one sees that tint in the Blue Grotto of Capri, or in warm latitudes at a distance from the land. It is, furthermore, not possible for waves to break without leaving the beach covered with foam for a wide space as they flow back. But here we see a roller ninety to a hundred feet high, judging from the cliffs and the spar, actually tumbling on a dry beach! It is cause for genuine regret when an artist of such real talents forgets himself in absurdities like these, and when a committee have so little regard for his reputation as to admit a work that can only inure to his injury. *On Marblehead Neck*, by J. C. Nicoll, is a vigorous piece of coast and surf painting. One actually seems to catch the salt flavor of the sea and the roar of the tumultuous breakers as he gazes on this work. A series of coast studies, modestly framed, hang on the stairway, painted by Mr. Charles Lanman, and

call for kindly attention for the freshness and fine feeling they display, and the truth of local color. Evidently rapid sketches, it would be unfair to regard them as finished pictures. We prefer them to the landscape studies on the opposite side of the staircase by the same artist, which offer similar qualities, but in a less marked degree. Mr. Silva's *Old New England Town* is a pleasing subject, rendered with a refinement which inclines to weakness. It scarcely does him justice.

Bating several extraordinary specimens, the present Exhibition is enriched by a number of truly admirable landscapes, indicating marked excellence, individuality of style, and native inspiration. *Gathering the Leaves*, by Mr. Edward Gay, is a very happy effort to represent a familiar autumnal scene. There is a fine senti-



BUTTONBALL TREES ON THE HOUSATONIC.

BY ARTHUR PARTON. — FROM A SKETCH BY THE ARTIST.

ment in this composition, which is treated with breadth and massiveness. In the presence of this canvas we seem to feel the breath of October sighing over the sere fields, betokening the coming of winter. Mr. Whittredge has also offered us in his *New England Shore* a typical American landscape both in subject and treatment. An old weather-worn farm-house by the sea, with its accessories, can be made very attractive when so pleasingly represented. Without sacrificing the essential details peculiar to such a scene, Mr. Whittredge has contrived to invest it with an indescribably poetic dreaminess that comes from a thorough love of his subject, together with the faculty of selecting what are the characteristic traits of the landscape, and harmoniously uniting them by the fervor of his imagination. Mr. Arthur Parton has shown equal felicity in grasping the character which may be displayed in a group of trees that have become veterans in the sunlight and the storm, and like a band of grizzled chieftains around a camp-fire have many adventures to relate. While altogether original in style, Mr. Parton's treatment of *Buttonball Trees on the Housatonic* has in it some of the firmness and grandeur of Harpignies's forest trees. We do not thoroughly admire the quality of greens he too often employs; there is in them a sickly hue sometimes. But it is pleasant to note the steady improvement apparent in his works.

Mr. Sanford Gifford also shows no falling off in his exhibits of this year. *The Parthenon* is a successful attempt to represent that ruin at an hour of the day — noon — when the light of a cloudless sky is particularly difficult to seize with effect. His painting of the Matterhorn towering into the blue, smitten by the glow of the setting sun, is, it is not too much to say, one of the noblest attempts at mountain painting ever undertaken by an American





THE COAST OF NEW ENGLAND.

BY R. SWAIN GIFFORD. — FROM A SKETCH BY THE ARTIST.

artist. We know not which most to admire, the firmness of the *technique*, the purity of the atmospheric tints, or the superb manner in which the outlines of the stupendous obelisk of the Alps have been chiselled against the heavens.

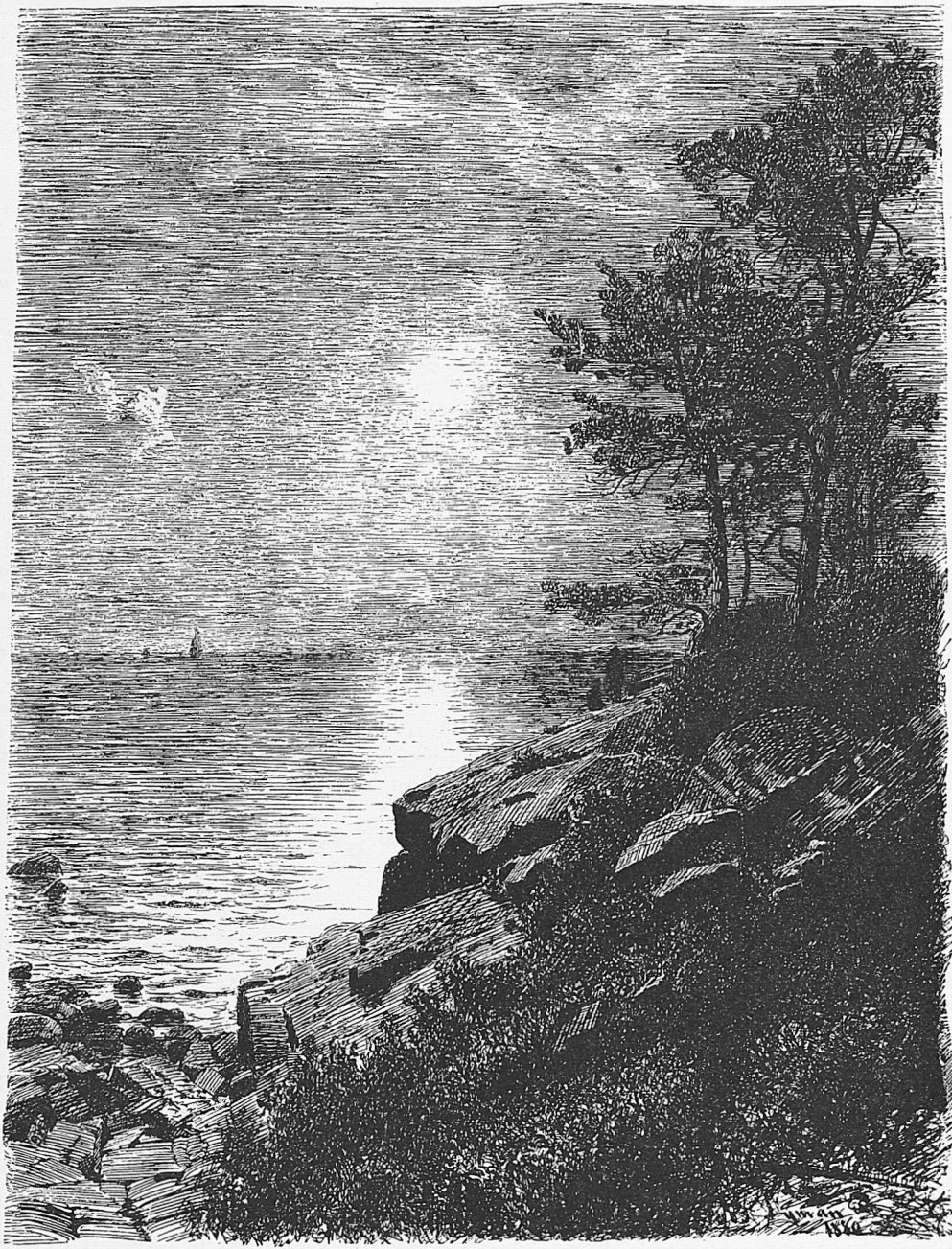
Mr. George H. Smillie has a most effective landscape in the South Room, happily entitled *Hard Fare*, as it represents the top of a rough hill shorn of all vegetation except thistles, heath, lichens, and mosses. This seemingly unpromising subject he has treated with remarkable observation and loving sympathy. Not only is this painting good as art, but also valuable as a lesson to show how rich even the barrenest spots on earth may be in beauty and suggestion, if only one has the eye to see them. *Cedar Meadow*, by Mr. James D. Smillie, is also a very pleasing rendering of a clump of cedars on the edge of a clearing, with a good feeling of distance beyond.

Altogether different in character is the canvas entitled *The Wreck*, by Mr. Lockwood De Forrest. Like a vast Atlantic wave, a rising ground in Sahara's waste looms up before us against the sky. On its crest are the sharply outlined forms of some travellers on camels, and in the immediate foreground is the skeleton of a camel bleaching under the burning sun. The composition is simple, but majestic. It is like one of the strange transitions of dream-land to turn from Mr. De Forrest's painting to Mr. Wyant's *New England Landscape*, which is decidedly one of the best of this artist's recent works. There is in it less of that vagueness which is perhaps carried too far in some of his paintings, while it yet retains the qualities which give such value to his art, — poetic feeling, suggestiveness, and a mysterious rendering of those subtle and multitudinous aspects of nature which elude the unpractised and unsympathetic eye.

*The Coast of New England*, by Mr. R. Swain Gifford, furnishes another of those titles of which there are a number in this Exhibition, which indicate a growing appreciation of the artistic possibilities of dear old New England. As an example of the genius of one of the ablest artists America has produced, we are inclined to give it a high rank. The lines of the composition, which are of far more importance than the public imagine, are harmoniously yet naturally arranged; the textures are admirably rendered; the feeling of space, distance, atmosphere, the values, and the middle tints and grays, are given in a style that leaves little to be desired; while a profound acceptance of the deep suggestions of nature pervades this masterly work. We are conscious in gazing upon it that it is the result of sound and mature reflection guiding a strongly imaginative inspiration. When we gaze on such pictures as this, we say it is almost treason to doubt the future of a national art which already produces such results. There are other good and characteristic landscapes by Messrs. McEntee, Martin, Thomas Moran, Bristol, Shurtleff, Robbins, Ferguson, T. L. Smith, Longfellow, and Miss Abbatt; but among the new exhibitors there is none who merits more attention than Mr. Thomas Allen, Jr., who is represented by two powerful pictures. *Maplehurst at Noon, or a Herd of Jersey Cattle*, is chiefly interesting for the landscape. The cattle are well painted, but

are open to criticism. The manner, however, in which the artist has rendered the slope of the hillside is quite remarkable, both in color and aerial perspective. *The Toilers of the Plains*, representing a Western landscape, with cattle, wagons, and Mexican drivers, is also a fine piece of work, with excellent qualities of color and composition, which merit a more extended analysis than our limits allow.

Among the work of the younger men, a very promising landscape by Mr. Joseph Lyman, Jr., entitled *A Summer Night*, must not be omitted. There is too much color and not enough mystery in the rocks of the foreground, considering the hour; color in moonlight there undoubtedly is, but it is suggested, rather than definitely expressed, as in broad daylight. But the tone in this picture is well sustained, and the effect charmingly poetic.



A SUMMER NIGHT.

BY JOSEPH LYMAN, JR. — FROM A SKETCH BY THE ARTIST.

In view of the number of truly excellent pictures in the Exhibition of 1880, of which we have by no means cited all, we respectfully submit that we are amply justified in finding much to encourage those who are really more interested in the growth of American art than in airing certain pet theories at its expense. Coupled with the evidences of progress there is seen an assertion of individuality, which leaves room for the hope that American art—though still far from having gained the summit—is yet on the upward road which, if followed with due diligence and perseverance, will surely lead to higher achievements.

S. G. W. BENJAMIN.

